

San Juan Coordinated Action Pilot Team Recommendations

Final Report

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Prepared for
New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department



By
San Juan Coordinated Action Pilot Team

Facilitated by
Sagebrush Ltd.



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List of Acronyms

ABQ	<i>Albuquerque</i>
CANS	<i>Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment</i>
CAT	<i>Crisis Assessment Tool</i>
CCBHC	<i>Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic</i>
CMS	<i>US Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services</i>
CYFD	<i>New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department</i>
EMDR	<i>Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing</i>
GED	<i>General Education Diploma</i>
HFW	<i>High-Fidelity Wraparound</i>
HSD	<i>New Mexico Human Services Department</i>
HUD	<i>US Department of Housing and Urban Development</i>
ICWA	<i>Indian Child Welfare Act</i>
IFPA	<i>Indian Family Protection Act</i>
MCO	<i>Managed Care Organization</i>
MRSS	<i>Mobile Response and Stabilization Services</i>
MST	<i>Multisystemic Therapy</i>
NM	<i>New Mexico</i>
SJC	<i>San Juan County</i>
SJ CAPT	<i>San Juan Coordinated Action Pilot Team</i>
ToP	<i>Technology of Participation</i>

Background

Kevin S. Settlement

“The Kevin S. Settlement is a groundbreaking agreement that brings together foster youth, child advocates, nationally recognized experts, and New Mexico’s Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and Human Services Department (HSD) to transform the State’s child welfare system.” (<https://kevinsettlement.com/>)

New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department (CYFD)

CYFD initiated the San Juan Coordinated Action Pilot Team project in accordance with the Kevin S. Settlement. This project served as a means to create:

- *A meaningful, solution-focused collaboration between the State, local behavioral health providers, and the local child-welfare community to look at current practice, identify strengths and challenges to implementing an integrated system of care that meets the individualized needs of children and their families involved with protective services.*

And,

- *...[operationalize] all reasonable recommendations and creative solutions brought forward and [build] out the availability of appropriate and needed services in the San Juan Community*

San Juan Coordinated Action Pilot Team (SJ CAPT)

The SJ CAPT is a dedicated team of individuals who work in the local child welfare system, as well as those with lived experience of the system. The team has met monthly since October 2023 to collaborate and create actionable recommendations for the State of New Mexico to implement and improve the child welfare system. The team included team members with the following perspectives:

- Child Welfare Group Trained IPP champion
- CYFD County Office Manager (COM) for local community
- CYFD Regional Office Manager (ROM) for the area
- CYFD Office of Tribal Affairs representative
- CYFD Behavioral Health Services representative(s) in the local community
- HSD representative familiar with the local community, including Behavioral/Medical Health [TBD] and MAD
- MCO Behavioral health & medical representatives
- MCO care coordinators from MCOs serving the community
- Children’s behavioral health and service providers from the local community
- PSD permanency planning worker(s) in the local community
- PSD employee responsible for resource family recruitment and/or retention in the local community
- Youth/former youth and/or parent with lived experience in the local community
- Resource parent(s) from the local community
- GAL/Youth Attorney that serves the local community
- Respondents’ Attorney that serves the local community
- Children’s court judge or designate

- Child welfare case worker or designate from Tribes, Nations, and Pueblos with children served in the local community; and
- A member of the Kevin S. Plaintiffs' team, who is also a representative from a protection or advocacy system
- Any other person that the local team determines would assist them in meeting the purpose of the pilot, with approval of both Co-Chairs

Sagebrush Ltd. (Sagebrush)

[Sagebrush](#) is an expert strategic planning and facilitation consulting firm based in Bayfield, Colorado, that utilizes highly effective, participatory methods to engage groups and individuals in problem solving to achieve their goals. Sagebrush was engaged by CYFD in September 2023 as a facilitation consultant to support the department in implementing the SJ CAPT project.

Project Approach

Process

Team members were initially recruited by CYFD to join the pilot project; additional members were identified by current members and approved by the SJ CAPT co-chairs. The team represented a wide breadth of perspectives including local service providers, MCOs, former resource parents, parents and adults with lived experience of the system, CYFD workers, and more.

The Sagebrush facilitation team guided the SJ CAPT through a process that involved building rapport as a team, establishing the context, drawing connections to the vision of the project, identifying community priorities and aligning them to the state priorities, identifying challenges and opportunities, developing opportunities into recommendations, and receiving feedback from the state.

After identifying challenges, the team worked in groups aligned with the CYFD's focus areas to develop and refine recommendations for the state. The three groups were:

- **Group A - *Least Restrictive and Most Appropriate Placements: Resource Foster Family Solutions***
- **Group B - *A Highly Skilled and Supported Workforce: CYFD Workforce Solutions***
- **Group C - *An Accessible, Trauma-Responsive System of Care: Provider & Regional System Solutions***

Methods

Sagebrush utilized Technology of Participation (ToP) consensus building and focused conversation methods. ToP methods provide a set of structured facilitation that:

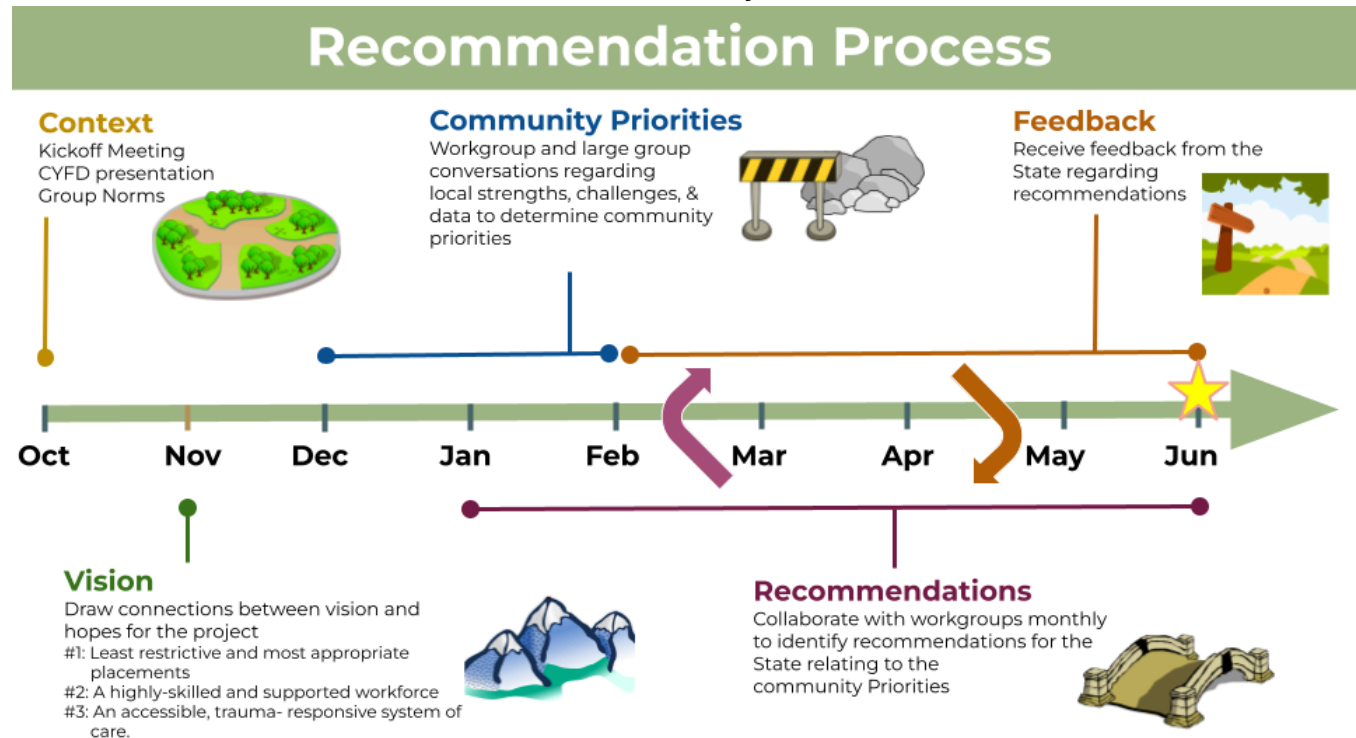
- Recognize and honor all contributors
- Facilitate inclusive and efficient discussions
- Deal with more data in less time
- Pool individual contributions into useful patterns, and
- Welcome diversity; minimize conflict.

ToP methods are highly effective in facilitating participatory decision-making by offering a natural consensus building process, building from individual, to small group to full group ideas and commitment. Sagebrush will work closely with the client throughout the process to co-design the sessions, logistics and objectives, and make adjustments to best meet the organization's needs.

Timeline

The SJ CAPT Team followed the below timeline during the pilot project.

2023 - 2024 San Juan Coordinated Action Pilot Team Project Timeline



San Juan Coordinated Action Pilot Team - Pilot Project

Overarching Purpose

Building & sustaining a trauma-informed child welfare and behavioral health system of care.

CYFD commitments

- To improve the current system of care and strengthen the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and Human Services Department (HSD) workforce to ensure provision of trauma-responsive care that centers children, youth, and the families engaged in New Mexico's child welfare system.
- To increase family-like and community-based, identity affirming placements for children/youth in State's custody that support them in healing and thriving into their futures.
- To efficaciously implement the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the Indian Family Protection Act (IFPA).
- To ensure a statewide, community-based behavioral health system that supports access to necessary services in communities and keeping children and youth in State's custody in New Mexico in the most family-like setting possible.

Purpose of the Coordinated Action Pilots

The Coordinated Action Pilots were created with the following purpose in mind:

- A meaningful, solution-focused collaboration between the State, local behavioral health providers, and the local child-welfare community to look at current practice, identify strengths and challenges to implementing an integrated system of care that meets the individualized needs of children and their families involved with protective services.
- [CYFD's] emphasis is on operationalizing all reasonable recommendations and creative solutions brought forward and on building out the availability of appropriate and needed services in the San Juan Community.

Desired Outcome

To provide concrete, community-specific recommendations on how to address identified challenges and barriers realistically and effectively to ensure successful implementation of a culturally supportive, trauma-responsive, and identity-affirming system of care for children/youth in CYFD's custody, to fill in any existing service gaps, and further develop services, including behavioral and mental health services identified in the Agreement, in the identified local communities.

SJC Coordinated Action Pilot Team: Community Priorities

The pilot team identified local challenges in reaching the overarching purpose of "building & sustaining a trauma-informed child welfare and behavioral health system of care". They used a consensus workshop process to cluster similar challenges into themes, listed below:

- **Group A - *Least Restrictive and Most Appropriate Placements: Resource Foster Family Solutions***
 - Recruitment, Support, Training, and Retention Needed for Resource Foster Families
 - Support Needed for Foster/Resource Families
- **Group B - *A Highly Skilled and Supported Workforce: CYFD Workforce Solutions***
 - Recruitment and Retention of CYFD Workers
 - Training for CYFD Staff and Authority Figures
 - Overwhelmed Reactive System
 - Negative Reputation and Association of CYFD

- **Group C - An Accessible, Trauma-Responsive System of Care: Provider & Regional System Solutions**
 - **Regional Systems of Care**
 - **Poor Communication Pathways**
 - **Not Enough Quality Providers**
 - **Recruitment and Retention of Workers for Our Local System**

SJC Coordinated Action Pilot Team: Brainstormed Solutions

The pilot team brainstormed potential solutions to the challenges they had identified above. The full list of possible solutions is listed in the [Appendix](#). From there, the group developed recommendations for the State, and engaged in a feedback loop process with the State to refine the recommendations.

SJC Coordinated Action Pilot Team: Recommendations

Goals of Group A - Least Restrictive and Most Appropriate Placements

- Our goal is to build a system that supports the placement of children/youth in the least-restrictive environments that are safe, stable, and community-based.
- Our children/youth have caregivers who understand their strengths and needs and can support them to heal and thrive.
- Our children/youth are in the most connected, most family-like setting that is appropriate for their unique needs.
- Our youth aged fourteen and older are consulted on their placement preferences.
- Our children/youth have stable placements that protect them from harm caused by multiple placement moves.
- Our children/youth are provided with a safe, nurturing, and permanent home quickly.

Group A Final Recommendations

(1) Dedicate Staff and a Budget to focus on the Recruitment and Retention of Resource Foster Families.

- a. Allocate and/or enhance dedicated positions of staff housed in and serving San Juan County and an appropriate budget to establish and effectuate a comprehensive recruitment and retention program (including data collection and analysis for the purposes of measuring and improving outcomes) aimed at increasing the number of resource foster families and retaining them as a resource family.
- b. Ensure that local provider agencies know about the recruitment and retention positions within CYFD and know who fills each position, whether they serve locally or regionally, and how to contact them and utilize their support.

(2) Create a support network to connect resource families with specialized providers (i.e., behavioral health, trauma, substance abuse, etc.) in order to provide early and ongoing training and support as needed to support resource foster families with the children placed in their homes.

- a. Increase the number of support staff/services working within communities to provide in-home training and support to resource foster families, ensuring they receive hands-on assistance.
- b. Identify a network of providers available to resource foster parents inside and outside of the area (state-wide network system).
- c. Provide resource families with services and supports from providers and CYFD staff that support families in times of need (see Group A: Rec 4.a), to build the knowledge and skills of resource families (such as secondary trauma, and how to self-advocate within CYFD).
- d. In addition to in-person training, ensure resources are easily accessible through online webinars on-demand, on specific topics that are relevant to resource foster families.
- e. In addition to in-person training, provide opportunities for those who have challenges in accessing technology to access the webinars and online training (set up a computer at the office, loan a laptop, etc.)
- f. CYFD provides more support around trauma that resource families experience directly.
- g. Streamline the reimbursement process and make it transparent.
- h. Establish a resource parent mentorship program in SJC.

(3) Offer Enhanced Information Sharing with Resource Foster Families about youth placed in foster care and create opportunities that encourage effective communication sharing between CYFD and resource foster parents in order to ask questions and seek clarification regarding the children placed in their home, fostering better understanding and communication.

- a. Ensure there is an understanding that people have multiple styles of learning, communication and comprehension, and there may be challenges in articulating/advocating on behalf of themselves or others.
- b. Identify ways CYFD can address and support the differentiated styles of communication/comprehension for resource parents. Such as through supporting a new contracted liaison position that is outside of CYFD (to be neutral).

(4) Ensure that CYFD is engaging in robust communication with resource families.

- a. Expand the 24:7 hotline for resource families - staffed by CYFD - to get more immediate responses. Response times should be within 1 hour (the same as TFC.) This would be different from the County on-call option.
- b. Improve the phone tree to ensure resource families get the feedback they need in a timely manner.
- c. Ensure there are sufficient on-call staff available to support resource foster parents in a timely manner in order to retain foster parents who often do not feel supported during times of crisis or urgent need.
- d. Recommend that the hotline to be staffed by a professional, able to truly assist and who has the ability to refer to a qualified third-party agency, linked directly to the resource family needing assistance. It is crucial that calls are returned within 1 hour.

Goals of Group B - A Highly Skilled and Supported Workforce

- Our goal is to build a strong, competent workforce that is culturally- and trauma-responsive.
- Our workforce is compassionate and demonstrates the competencies needed to recognize and respond to the diverse needs of our children and families.
- Our workforce is collaborative and deeply committed to a teaming approach.
- Our workforce receives the support needed to address vicarious trauma, burn-out, and compassion fatigue.
- Our workforce has access to ongoing training, coaching, and quality supervision that supports continuous improvement of our practices and a culture of learning.
- Our workforce is valued, supported, and has opportunities for growth, development, and advancement.

Group B Final Recommendations

(1) Provide ongoing training and professional development opportunities for CYFD staff, including supervision and trauma-informed care training, to enhance skills and knowledge in child welfare practices.

- a. Focus on providing training and professional development to enhance supervisory and management skills. Train our supervisors to train our workers.
- b. Continue to grow and advertise a mentoring program to offer additional support for supervisors beyond the three-day training. Ensure that the mentor is vetted and can effectively train the mentee.
- c. Include hands-on trauma responsive training in a safe environment so that staff are more capable/prepared to manage in real life crisis situations.
- d. Include a trauma informed program that expands on skills (i.e., a 101 class then 102 class).
- e. Provide CYFD training opportunities in the local communities rather than always having to travel to Albuquerque. Trainers come to the local CYFD staff and communities instead.
- f. Changed the format of trainings, so that staff can practice the skills they are being trained in (vs. just lecture style training), such as hands on or role playing opportunities.

(2) Improve Communication and Morale-Building Efforts.

- a. Enhance communication within CYFD through statewide initiatives led by senior leadership, ensuring transparency and consistency in messaging. Additionally, implement morale-building activities and public celebratory events to boost staff morale.
- b. Designate a streamlined communication system (one deputy or leader) who sends out statewide emails and encourages the development of the blog. Clarify who shares the information (not having multiple people sharing the same information).
- c. Clarify leadership and decision-making structure to support two-way consistent communication.
- d. Conduct quarterly management meetings (virtual is fine) to ensure messaging consistency.
- e. Consider “reverse-shadowing” where leadership follows those out in the field for a week or so.
- f. Include a budget and staff time, for job related team and morale building activities, onsite and offsite.
- g. Create safe spaces to speak – a path for staff to communicate concerns freely without fear of reprimand.
- h. Streamline communication between pillars, utilizing frontline and community feedback. There is currently a perception that there are communication challenges in the new pillar system.

(3) Implement Comprehensive Recruitment and Retention Strategies.

- a. Review other State Recruitment & Retention/HR Plans, especially those with high recruitment rates & high retention rates.
- b. Develop and implement financial incentives and competitive pay structures to attract and retain CYFD workers, particularly in rural communities.
- c. Establish hiring goals to address attrition and turnover rates, ensuring an adequate workforce to meet the needs of children and families.
- d. Develop Career Pathways that encourage & compensate for higher degrees & licensures.
- e. Provide additional frontline support or administrative support consistent across units to manage administrative tasks, transportation, etc.
- f. Conduct a Pay Equity Analysis to address pay bands that consider experience, degrees, licensure, & positions (Investigators vs. Permanency).

Goals of Group C - An Accessible, Trauma-Responsive System of Care

- Our goal is to build a system that thoroughly understands the unique needs of each child/youth in State's custody and has the holistic services needed to address these needs.
- Screenings and assessments are timely and conducted to facilitate appropriate referrals to services and to ensure a deep understanding of our children and youth's needs.
- Comprehensive services are readily available and easily accessible to address the unique and intersectional needs of our children, youth, and families.
- Medical and behavioral health services are culturally relevant and identity affirming.
- Services are available in the local communities in which our children and youth reside.
- Whenever appropriate, services are evidenced-based and address the specific needs and experiences of our children, youth, and their families.

Group C Final Recommendations

(1) Address Service Gaps/Needs:

- a. Establish youth crisis centers or response teams in SJC. (Update: CMS just approved Mobile Response Teams under State Plan Amendment, Medicaid funded at the end of Feb. '24. CYFD actively working on roll out/implementation).
- b. Group home availability in the county.
- c. Provide transportation for the families of youth to acute care facilities in New Mexico. This is not covered under current services.
- d. Recruit child psychologists/psychiatrists to SJC for in-person appointments, and continue to provide virtual appointments for those who this works for.
- e. Increase awareness of the Residential Treatment Center in SJC to meet the specific needs of children and families in the region.
- f. Establish a stepping stone for CYFD youth that are aging out of the system: Transitional Living Services for older youth, including housing. This needs to be both covered by Medicaid and other non-Medicaid funds so that the opportunity is available to all youth.
- g. Ensure access to HUD Programming, education programs for GED, NM workforce Connections and education around services or programs that are not available locally.
- h. Expand Fostering Connections Program.
- i. Need to continue to support autism awareness - so families know how to navigate the diagnosis and services.

Note: *Transportation reliability issues for families to access services timely, as it is not always possible to have 24-48 hrs. to pre-arrange for transportation. While transportation is available to all children on Medicaid, there is currently a shortage of drivers for medical services which is impacting timeliness of services.*

(2) Enhance Cultural Competency and Diversity Training:

- a. Provide culturally relevant training and services to ensure equitable service delivery and support for diverse populations, addressing the specific needs and perspectives of diverse cultural and linguistic communities.

(3) Invest in Behavioral Health Services

- a. Allocate more funding for behavioral health services and evidence-based treatments such as MST, HFW, and EMDR, addressing the shortage of providers and ensuring access to high-quality care for traumatized youths.
- b. Explore the possibility of HSD supporting one credentialing platform between MCO's (currently it is inefficient, and difficult to hire positions who need multiple licenses.)
- c. Explore how to better support local providers (with increased Medicaid rates, and decrease exclusionary criteria) in keeping higher needs children in their community.

(4) Facilitate Integrated Regional Systems of Care.

- a. Focus on supporting robust community-based services (such as high-fidelity wraparound, crisis response and autism services), rather than a facility or higher level of care.
- b. Bring more community-based services to the area, such as: MRSS for youth in crisis.
- c. Review the New Day model in ABQ and support something similar in SJC (drop-in center for youth for peer support, wraparound, for crisis response). It is recommended to have a full continuum of care including behavioral health services & practitioners in our area, to avoid long waitlists. Support autism awareness - so families know how to navigate the diagnosis and services.

(5) *Provide Comprehensive Support for Workers.*

- a. Address factors contributing to poor recruitment and retention, including poor healthcare, limited resources, and pay disparity, by offering comprehensive support such as scholarships, internships, and access to healthcare and recreational activities. This recommendation is focused on workers at provider agencies, including non-profit behavioral health providers supporting New Mexico children and youth, rather than CYFD workers (See Workgroup B.)
 - i. Explore examples of coalitions in other states joining as a group to provide more comprehensive support for their workers through economies of scale.
- b. Explore ways of giving provider agencies access to the same type of state benefits, or a state-wide group (economies of scale) for pay scales and benefits so that providers can be more competitive to retain staff. It would be incredible to be able to offer benefits similar to CYFD to the provider agencies.

(6) *Establish a one-stop-shop online platform for all services provided in a county to improve intake and response times.*

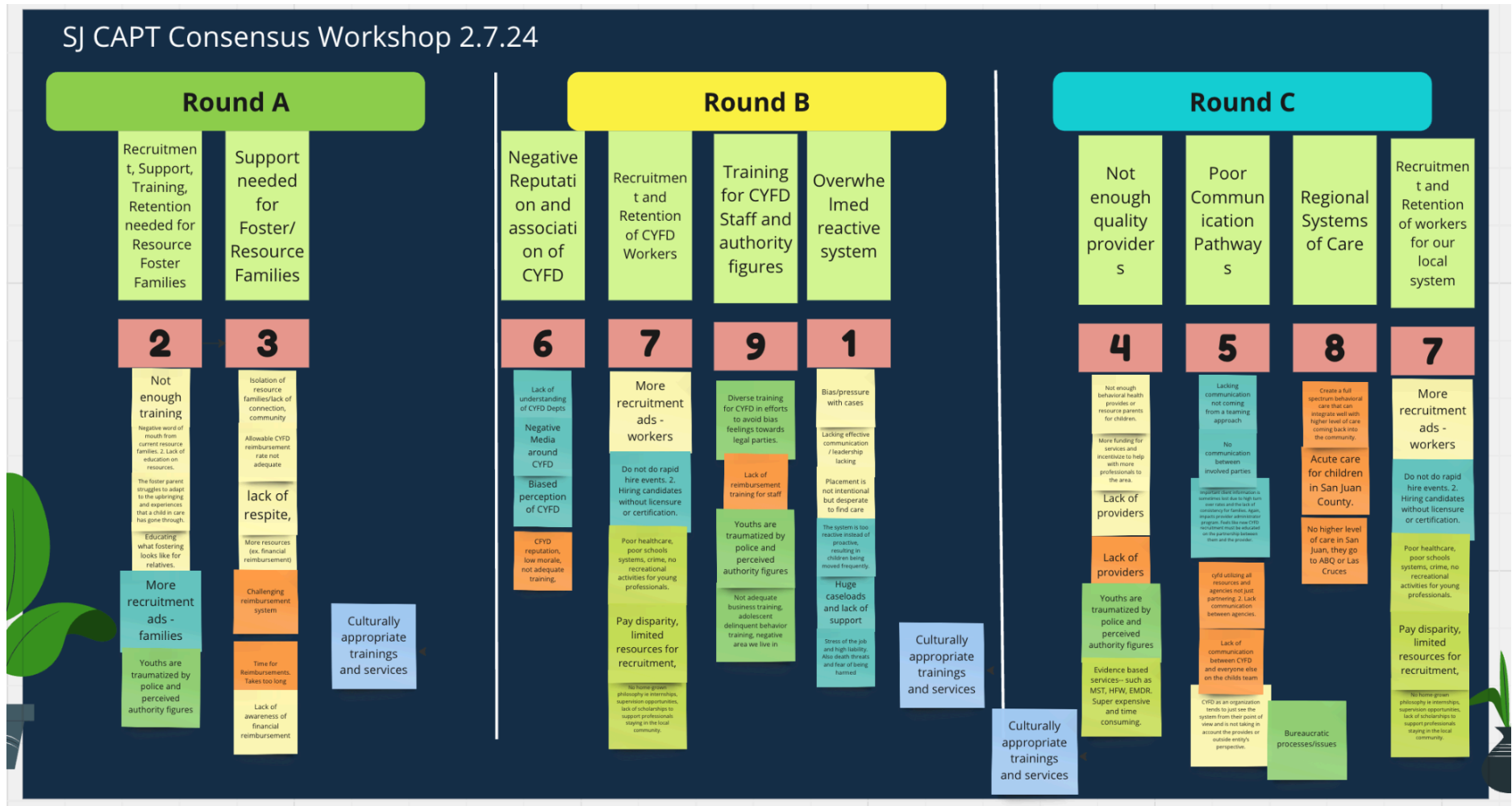
- a. Establish a one-stop-shop online platform for all services provided in a county to improve intake and response times, enhancing resources and collaboration opportunities.

(7) *Re-align the CYFD CCBHC positions or contract with Provider Agencies that do therapy and assessments.*

- a. Realign the CYFD CCBHC positions or contract with Provider Agencies that offer therapy and assessments to assure each child/youth in state custody in NM receives a Comprehensive Assessment (a comprehensive mental health and substance abuse assessment on an annual basis), as opposed to a regular assessment. This will help determine what services youth need and get them into appropriate levels of care as quickly as possible. This can also inform the needed services in our region.
 - i. Ensure that children in Tribal custody are being served in the same ways.
- b. Create a transparent dashboard for the legislature, community, and partners to inform what % of youth are receiving the services they need? Accountability measure: dashboard on service utilization. (We recognize that youth 14+ years of age can also refuse services.) A de-identified report that can easily pull data from CYFD.
- c. Continue to provide agencies with flexibility for completing CANS - it is a valuable tool, and also takes a lot of time.

Appendix A: Community Priorities & Brainstormed Solutions

The pilot team identified local challenges in reaching the overarching purpose. They used a consensus workshop process to cluster similar challenges into themes, which are recorded below. Afterwards, they developed brainstormed solutions, which led to the final recommendations.



Group A - Resource Foster Family Solutions | Community Priorities

- Recruitment, Support, Training, and Retention Needed for Resource Foster Families
- Support Needed for Foster/Resource Families

Challenges Brainstorm:

Recruitment, Support, Training, and Retention Needed for Resource Foster Families

- Culturally appropriate trainings and services
- Not enough training
- Negative word of mouth from current resource families. 2. Lack of education on resources.
- The foster parent struggles to adapt to the upbringing and experiences that a child in care has gone through.
- Educating what fostering looks like for relatives.
- More recruitment ads - families
- Youths are traumatized by police and perceived authority figures

Support Needed for Foster/Resource Families

- Isolation of resource families/lack of connection, community
- Allowable CYFD reimbursement rate not adequate
- lack of respite
- More resources (ex. financial reimbursement)
- Challenging reimbursement system
- Time for Reimbursements. Takes too long
- Lack of awareness of financial reimbursement

Solutions Brainstorm:

- To implement Recruitment, retention and training Plan it takes dedicated staff & advertising \$ to create an "A"-level system.
- Increase number of support staff that work in community who provide training and in home support to resource foster families
- Provide more financial resources for youth so they feel more like others (ie-phones, clothes, etc.)
- Giving foster families more information about the youth placed with them
- Training that is hands on, not from a book
- Trainings and providers who can do ongoing cultural classes for families ex. Hair braiding, Navajo language class
- "Mentor" foster parents for new foster parents
- Provide local groups/activities for resource families and have local resources attend and present on services
- Resource parents need to ask more questions regarding child(ren) placed in their home
- Provide community opportunities for foster

- Enhancement and personalization of national night out. Follow up with smaller groups
- Mentoring program for foster parents
- Contract training/trainers for resource foster families
- Create recruitment, retention, training plan for the state
- Recruit parents specifically for respite
- On recruitment ads and flyers include the financial support provided to care for kids
- Offer virtual trainings or e-learning pathways
- A simplified online database for foster parents to submit reimbursements
- Use CANS survey to determine level of care needed for youth
- Trainings with incentives
- Based on child diagnosis have an in home provider come to foster parent home once a week for two months to help with adjustments and challenges
- Create a centralized training hub/center
- Incentivize with pay additional trainings resource families attend

<p>families to meet and talk with each other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ICWA workers are a great resource for traditions - Start mentorship program statewide current foster family helps new families - Bring back CQI and deadlines to address concerns and improvements 30-60 action plans - Mandatory ice breakers w/in 48 hours of placement - Carrots (financial, social, otherwise) to entice new foster families - Identify/hire one person to focus on recruiting families - Simplify licensing process - Hire dedicated training staff or contract with Center of Innovation that travel to all regions to do live trainings for F.P.s and CYFD staff - CYFD investigators can work with Law Enforcement in helping traumatized youth. They can provide stickers, stuffed animals, and a little more one-on-one time before shuffling them to their next placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide childcare for resources foster families to attend trainings required identified needs of children or culturally reflective of child's needs - Increase # of adoption specialists - Provide mentoring for new parents with more experienced parent - Foster Care info sessions in the community - CYFD should partner with their training platform - cornerstone to offer more options in trainings - CYFD could survey current resource families to fix issue before negative word of mouth happens - CYFD provide more funding to local community providers to provide respite - Set a higher recruitment target for resource families and up as needed due to current state of crisis state is in - Bring foster parents together for support group and social - Financial Incentive to obtain training - Provide one month reimbursement to each foster family with each new placement of a child - "Get together" for all foster families ie. BBQs, dessert, builds community
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Group A: Clustered Solutions Brainstorm

Recruitment and Retention Strategies:

- To implement Recruitment, retention, and training Plan it takes dedicated staff & advertising \$ to create an "A"-level system.
- Increase the number of support staff that work in the community who provide training and in-home support to resource foster families.
- Carrots (financial, social, otherwise) to entice new foster families.
- Identify/hire one person to focus on recruiting families.
- Recruit parents specifically for respite.
- Set a higher recruitment target for resource families and up as needed due to the current state of crisis the state is in.
- Financial Incentive to obtain training.

Training and Support for Foster Families:

- Training that is hands-on, not from a book.
- Trainings and providers who can do ongoing cultural classes for families, e.g., Hair

braiding, Navajo language class.

- “Mentor” foster parents for new foster parents.
- Mentoring program for foster parents.
- Contract training/trainers for resource foster families.
- Provide childcare for resources foster families to attend trainings required identified needs of children or culturally reflective of child’s needs.
- Trainings with incentives.
- Provide one month reimbursement to each foster family with each new placement of a child.
- Provide more funding to local community providers to provide respite.

Communication and Information Sharing:

- Giving foster families more information about the youth placed with them.
- Resource parents need to ask more questions regarding child(ren) placed in their home.
- CYFD could survey current resource families to fix issues before negative word of mouth happens.

Enhancing Community Engagement and Support:

- Provide local groups/activities for resource families and have local resources attend and present on services.
- Bring foster parents together for support group and social.
- Foster Care info sessions in the community.
- “Get together” for all foster families, i.e., BBQs, dessert, builds community.
- Enhancement and personalization of national night out. Follow up with smaller groups.

Administrative and Procedural Improvements:

- Simplify licensing process.
- A simplified online database for foster parents to submit reimbursements.
- CYFD should partner with their training platform - cornerstone to offer more options in trainings.
- Create a centralized training hub/center.

Assessment and Care Coordination:

- Use CANS survey to determine level of care needed for youth.
- Based on child diagnosis have an in-home provider come to foster parent home once a week for two months to help with adjustments and challenges.

Group B - CYFD Workforce Solutions | Community Priorities

- Recruitment and Retention of CYFD Workers
- Training for CYFD Staff and Authority Figures
- Overwhelmed Reactive System
- Negative Reputation and Association of CYFD

Challenges Brainstorm:

- Culturally appropriate trainings and services

Negative Reputation and Association of CYFD

- Lack of understanding of CYFD Depts
- Negative Media around CYFD
- Biased perception of CYFD
- CYFD reputation, low morale, not adequate training,

Recruitment and Retention of CYFD Workers

- More recruitment ads - workers
- Do not do rapid hire events. 2. Hiring candidates without licensure or certification.
- Poor healthcare, poor school systems, crime, no recreational activities for young professionals.
- Pay disparity, limited resources for recruitment,
- No home-grown philosophy i.e. internships, supervision opportunities, lack of scholarships to support professionals staying in the local community.

Training for CYFD Staff and Authority Figures

- Diverse training for CYFD in efforts to avoid bias feelings towards legal parties.
- Lack of reimbursement training for staff
- Youths are traumatized by police and perceived authority figures
- Not adequate business training, adolescent delinquent behavior training, negative area we live in

Overwhelmed Reactive System

- Bias/pressure with cases
- Lacking effective communication / leadership lacking
- Placement is not intentional but desperate to find care
- The system is too reactive instead of proactive, resulting in children being moved frequently.
- Huge caseloads and lack of support
- Stress of the job and high liability. Also death threats and fear of being harmed

Solutions Brainstorm:

- Provide financial or other incentive for living/working in rural community
- Create a better system for caseload management (ie. recognize that some youth will require a lot more time than others)
- Reassess if (Pilars) revising the supervision structure is meeting its goals - or did it cause more frustration and confusion
- Due to crisis the state is in now - deploy all possible seasoned staff in any department within CYFD to support front line until crisis averted
- Bring back A-level retirees at good rates of pay
- Make transparency and communication within CYFD more statewide communication from higher ups to set the tone and assure the message is delivered and then meet at each county level to better implement changes
- Do rolling recruitment and hire workers with licenses and familiarity with local community
- Ensure staff have adequate health and wellness opportunities
- Incentives to work in rural areas
- PR person who gives positive reports social media, etc
- CYFD San Juan County has investigation supervisors that are uncooperative * need to

to fix current problems with CYFD deploy statewide

- Don't pay new workers more than workers with 5-10-20 years of experience
- Assure hiring goals of CYFD are increased by 25% to deal with attrition and high turnover rates
- Research highly functioning state and determine how they have reformed and implement those proven ideas
- Community training with local partners CYFD could understand our process
- If there is proof that resource parents took child to out of county doctor appointments just approve no MFD's
- Retention - provide more advancement opportunities for staff with a pay increase of 10% or for experience of 5 years or 10 years
- Assess caseload and challenges - hard cases count more
- Quarterly provider and CYFD meetings
- CYFD should allow resource parents to submit their own reimbursements allowing them to work directly with that department. It would speed it up taking busy worker out
- Better media coverage with example from real staff
- Public celebratory holiday events and publicize them
- CYFD can present to community partners more regarding their process
- Less case/kid load per CYFD worker
- Triage Center for local youth with the county
- Provide trauma care to address Secondary trauma
- Media can showcase more positive and uplifting stories

restructure investigations

- Provide more field training to investigators
- Lower more manageable caseloads
- Assure training is able to handle large influx of rapid hires and train supervisors in management trainings and goals and objectives
- CYFD - morale is low but this will take change of the large CYFD system to move the gauge. 1st review and remove unreasonable expectations
- Training for supervisors or more qualified personnel
- CYFD workers should have a mandatory paid ride along with police and "internship" at lawyer's office
- Crisis Intervention for foster resource parents. For all youth
- Hire admin staff to process paperwork
- CYFD work with local government to provide incentives for child welfare staff
- Hire more CYFD employees and train them
- Streamline system referral process ie. CYFD to Wraparound
- Conduct and summarize exit interviews and listen to input
- Lower caseloads for CYFD workers
- More training on how CYFD may re-traumatize children to avoid it
- Providers, court, attorney's to improve the language they use about CYFD
- Competitive pay for CYFD compared to other professions
- Increase pay for CYFD workers
- If youth placed in other counties have regional workers in that county to assist to do the Face to Face visits so staff not pulled from their county

Group B: Clustered Solutions Brainstorm

Recruitment and Retention Strategies:

- Provide financial or other incentives for living/working in rural communities.
- Bring back A-level retirees at good rates of pay to fix current problems with CYFD deploy statewide.
- Don't pay new workers more than workers with 5-10-20 years of experience.
- Assure hiring goals of CYFD are increased by 25% to deal with attrition and high turnover rates.
- Do rolling recruitment and hire workers with licenses and familiarity with the local community.
- Incentives to work in rural areas.
- Hire more CYFD employees and train them.
- Competitive pay for CYFD compared to other professions.
- Increase pay for CYFD workers.

Operational Efficiency and Support:

- Create a better system for caseload management (i.e., recognize that some youth will require a lot more time than others).
- Assess caseload and challenges - hard cases count more.
- Lower more manageable caseloads.
- Assure training is able to handle large influx of rapid hires and train supervisors in management trainings and goals and objectives.
- Streamline system referral process, i.e., CYFD to Wraparound.
- Hire admin staff to process paperwork.

Training and Professional Development:

- Reassess if revising the supervision structure is meeting its goals - or did it cause more frustration and confusion.
- More training on how CYFD may re-traumatize children to avoid it.
- Training for supervisors or more qualified personnel.
- Provide more field training to investigators.
- Ensure staff have adequate health and wellness opportunities.
- Onboarding programs including shadowing workers before taking a caseload.

Community Engagement and Public Relations:

- Community training with local partners CYFD could understand our process.
- Better media coverage with example from real staff.
- Public celebratory holiday events and publicize them.
- CYFD can present to community partners more regarding their process.
- PR person who gives positive reports social media, etc.
- Providers, court, attorney's to improve the language they use about CYFD.

Morale, Communication, and Cultural Sensitivity:

- Make transparency and communication within CYFD more statewide communication from higher ups to set the tone and assure the message is delivered and then meet at each county level to better implement changes.

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- CYFD - morale is low but this will take change of the large CYFD system to move the gauge. 1st review and remove unreasonable expectations.
- CYFD San Juan County has investigation supervisors that are uncooperative - need to restructure investigations.
- Conduct and summarize exit interviews and listen to input.
- More training on how CYFD may re-traumatize children to avoid it.

Crisis Intervention and Support Services:

- Due to crisis the state is in now - deploy all possible seasoned staff in any department within CYFD to support front line until crisis averted.
- Crisis Intervention for foster resource parents. For all youth.
- Provide trauma care to address Secondary trauma.
- If youth placed in other counties have regional workers in that county to assist to do the Face to Face visits so staff not pulled from their county.

Group C - Provider & Regional System Solutions | Community Priorities

- Regional Systems of Care
- Poor Communication Pathways
- Not Enough Quality Providers
- Recruitment and Retention of Workers for Our Local System

Challenges Brainstorm:

- Culturally appropriate trainings and services

Not Enough Quality Providers

- Not enough behavioral health providers or resource parents for children.
- More funding for services and incentives to help with more professionals to the area.
- Lack of providers
- Lack of providers
- Youths are traumatized by police and perceived authority figures
- Evidence based services-- such as MST, HFW, EMDR. Super expensive and time consuming.

Poor Communication Pathways

- Lacking communication not coming from a teaming approach
- No communication between involved parties
- Important client information is sometimes lost due to high turnover rates and the lack of consistency for families. Again, impacts provider administrator programs. Feels like new CYFD recruitment must be educated on the partnership between them and the provider.
- CYFD utilizes all resources and agencies, not just partnering. 2. Lack of communication between agencies.

- Lack of communication between CYFD and everyone else on the child's team
- CYFD as an organization tends to just see the system from their point of view and is not taking in account the provided or outside entity's perspective.
- Bureaucratic processes/issues

Regional Systems of Care

- Create a full spectrum behavioral care that can integrate well with higher levels of care coming back into the community.
- Acute care for children in San Juan County.
- No higher level of care in San Juan, they go to ABQ or Las Cruces

Recruitment and Retention of Workers for Our Local System

- More recruitment ads - workers
- Do not do rapid hire events. 2. Hiring candidates without licensure or certification.
- Poor healthcare, poor school systems, crime, no recreational activities for young professionals.
- Pay disparity, limited resources for recruitment,
- No home-grown philosophy i.e. internships, supervision opportunities, lack of scholarships to support professionals staying in the local community.

Solutions Brainstorm:

- Meeting monthly on case specifics between CYFD and providers
 - Progress can be discussed
 - Recommendations
 - Support
 - Next Steps
- Onboarding - Shadow workers before taking a

- CYFD build relationship with all community resources by working MDT
- CYFD could educate outside providers on their procedures to minimize miscommunication
- Build in provider contracts continuing for a longer period of time. Money will be available to hire and keep qualified staff
- CYFD do better with their 48 hour responses

<p>case load</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervisors be better informed of the cases and situations - Recruit more foster families focus on child based as need - Create community based monthly meetings to address all needs for youth families, stakeholders, leadership - Give all state workers a 6% annual raise equal pay for everyone not just a few - Do not place high level of care children before having ice breakers - Recruit, train & provide financial incentive for treatment foster care homes in San Juan County - Youth Crisis center or response teams - Local provider conference, space to learn and collaborate across providers - Provide money to set up programs (train/certification) - Prioritize higher provider rates. Pay workers what they are worth (Masters, PH and they will stay) - Recruit from local community and offer to pay for higher education and training - Have clear guidelines on communication requirements between CYFD and child's team - Humanize children when trying to locate Therapeutic Foster Care or Home or Residential Treatment Center. Many referrals look like a list of diagnoses 	<p>to the legal team-so we feel heard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service providers pairing more together than separate - Tax incentives to professionals/providers to work in the needed areas and provide services - Incentives (scholarships/collaboration with universities) to include providers - Improve reimbursement process - CYFD collaborate with others and follow recommendation - San Juan county NEEDS more Btt staff to treat the families - Need group home in San Juan - Have traveling children's psych come to San Juan weekly - Need an acute care in San Juan - One stop shop with a list online for all providers. Where can do intake online and see wait time in live response - "Task Force" within law enforcement that is trained for CYFD related issues and works with CYFD - more training and more consistently than regular responding officers - CYFD workers NEED to provide timely and monthly case updates - San Juan County needs to open a Residential Treatment Center?
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Group C: Clustered Solutions Brainstorm

Communication and Collaboration:

- Meeting monthly on case specifics between CYFD and providers.
- Establishing clear guidelines on communication requirements between CYFD and the child's team.
- CYFD building relationships with all community resources by working through multidisciplinary teams (MDT).
- CYFD educating outside providers on their procedures to minimize miscommunication.
- CYFD ensuring timely and monthly case updates to stakeholders.

Professional Development and Support:

- Providing local provider conferences and space for collaboration across providers.
- Offering scholarships and collaboration with universities to recruit and retain

professionals.

- Prioritizing higher provider rates and ensuring fair compensation for workers.
- Educating providers on humanizing children to better match them with appropriate care.

Recruitment and Retention Strategies:

- Recruiting more foster families with a focus on child-based needs.
- Providing recruitment, training, and financial incentives for treatment foster care homes in San Juan County.
- Recruiting from the local community and offering to pay for higher education and training.

Administrative Improvement:

- Providing funding to set up programs for training and certification.
- Streamlining the reimbursement process for providers.
- Implementing a one-stop-shop online platform for all providers to streamline intake and response times.

Service Expansion and Facility Development:

- Establishing youth crisis centers or response teams.
- Opening group homes and an acute care facility in San Juan County.
- Developing a Residential Treatment Center in San Juan County.

Incentives and Taxation:

- Providing tax incentives to professionals/providers to work in needed areas and provide services.
- Offering incentives such as scholarships and collaboration with universities to include providers in the system.

Law Enforcement Collaboration:

- Creating a task force within law enforcement trained for CYFD-related issues.
- Ensuring law enforcement collaborates effectively with CYFD and follows recommendations.

There were a few Group C solution ideas that did not fit neatly into the clustered categories:

- Give all state workers a 6% annual raise equal pay for everyone not just a few
- Do not place high level of care children before having ice breakers
- CYFD workers NEED to provide timely and monthly case updates

Appendix B: 6/5/24 Meeting Public Comments & CYFD Next Steps

- Sandya opened up the floor for any public comments inviting everyone to consider what they appreciated seeing, any gaps or missing pieces, and hopes for how the recommendations move forward. The public and pilot team members shared about the following:
 - **General Feedback**
 - The effort and time invested in the discussions were significant and appreciated.
 - The questions raised were insightful and sometimes eye-opening.
 - It can be challenging to see issues clearly when deeply involved, but the discussions provided valuable perspectives.
 - The sessions yielded positive outcomes and insights for participants.
 - **Positive Experiences**
 - Foster parents highlighted the life-changing impact of the High Fidelity Wraparound program.
 - Appreciation was expressed for the support received from Guardians ad Litem (GALs), especially those on the pilot team.
 - Team members developed stronger connections with those working within the system and now have more resources to go to when there is a challenge.
 - **Challenges**
 - Managing more than two children in foster homes poses significant challenges.
 - Recruitment of foster parents needs substantial financial backing.
 - There is a perception that GALs for non-ICWA children are less supportive.
 - Foster parents often face communication challenges with the state and this was noted as a critical focus area.
 - **Hopes and Suggestions**
 - Recruitment of excellent case workers and foster parents is crucial.
 - Recognition and appreciation for the team's efforts were emphasized, along with the need for regular updates.
 - Relative families need more support & training - this is an area where we can always improve.
 - Supporting employees who experience secondary trauma, in order to retain them.
 - Foster families also need support when they experience secondary trauma.
 - **Appreciations and Kudos**
 - Many participants were unable to attend but were crucial to the group's success.
 - Recognition for specific individuals:
 - Bianca, the change specialist, for her support.
 - Brandi acknowledged the people who were not in the room at the time but who were critical in the process.
 - Crystal for her willingness to help.
 - Patricia for successful recruitment efforts and support from Sec. Casados.
 - Acknowledgment of the MCO partners' involvement and encouragement for the team to seek support as needed.

- **Concerns and Improvements**
 - Concerns about whether the initiatives would lead to tangible changes, though early signs of progress were noted.
 - Increased budget for recruitment efforts was mentioned as a positive development.
 - Relatives of foster children need more support, especially those unfamiliar with the system.
 - Employee retention requires attention and support.

Next Steps for CYFD

- **Secretary Casado's office commits to providing update reports from CYFD to the SJ CAPT pilot team or progress made towards implementing their final recommendations in the following schedule:**
 - **3 months (by Sept 5th)**
 - **6 months (Dec 5th)**
 - **1 year (June 5, 2025)**